

1 — LETTER OF NOMINATION

April 1, 2025

Executive Director Gomulinski
Tau Beta Pi Headquarters
508 Dougherty Hall
P.O. Box 2697
Knoxville, TN 37901-2697

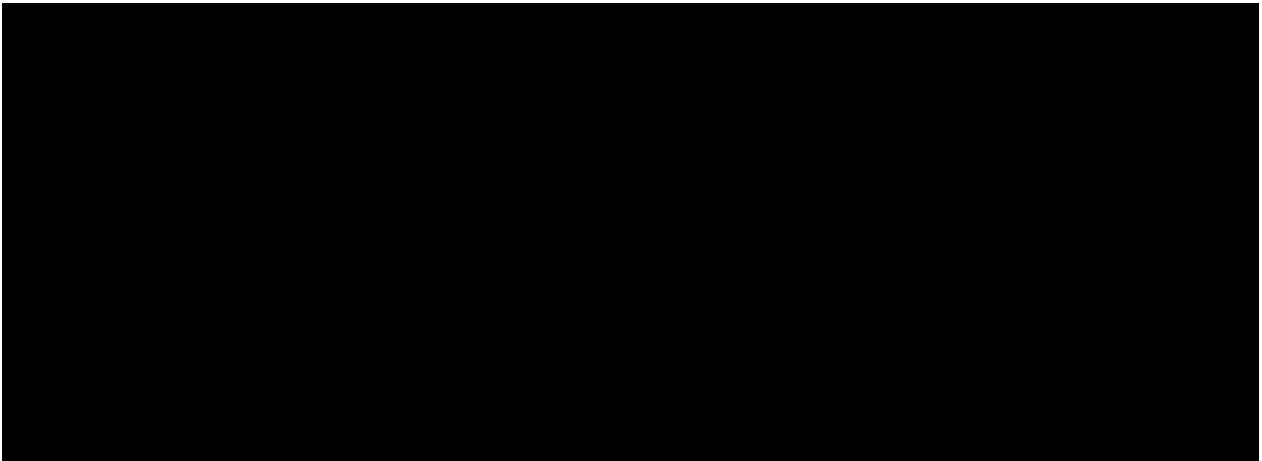
Dear Mr. Gomulinski,

It is the distinct pleasure of the Kansas Gamma Chapter's Awards Committee to deliver this nomination package for Nicholas R. Divilbiss as a candidate for the Laureate Award.

The committee selected Nick as a candidate for this prestigious award based on the dedication to service which he continues to display as a member of Tau Beta Pi, as a member of other organizations, and that he displayed as a citizen of Linn County, Kansas before coming to Kansas State University. Nick has overcome an unusual set of obstacles in his lifetime; his commitment to succeed despite them has inspired others as proven by attached documentation. He strives to serve others and lead in fairness with democratic principles, integrity, and honesty.

Nick is currently the 85th and longest serving president of the Kansas Gamma Chapter, and his historical research, conducted while he was reportedly a temporary resident in your household, is the sole reason for the chapter's current awareness of either of those facts. This nomination package is the fourth such package submitted by Kansas Gamma since 1995, and the chapter hopes to finally secure a laureate award for one of its most deserving members who has consistently gone out of his way to faithfully serve the Association, regardless of associated hardship and cost. The chapter extends its thanks to Tau Beta Pi's selection committee for consideration given to this nomination package.

Sincerely:



2 — NOMINATION SUMMARY

The five strongest points contained in this documentation which make Nick Divilbiss worthy of the Laureate designation are as follows:

- Nick's life story is one of resilience and determination in overcoming obstacles to achieve success. As described in his biographical sketch, his dedication to service predates his time as an engineering student, and he has a proven reputation for inspiring others at K-State, as evidenced by the perspectives included with his attached Anderson Senior Award for Outstanding Inspiration.
- Nick's consistent commitment to serving others during his time as an engineering student is exemplified by his involvement as a founding member of Fostering Success, his [REDACTED] dedication to humanitarian service trips, and his desire to innovate his teaching to inspire his Statics students to strive for success not only as future engineers, but also as engaged and responsible citizens.
- Nick's willingness to endure hardship and unsafe conditions in pursuit of expanding his worldview, advancing the Bent-O-Rama project, and creating engaging and inspiring content for Kansas Gamma's social media presence — as well as for readers of *The Bent* magazine through his series of reflections documenting his *Bentspedition* — shows his extraordinary commitment to service.
- Nick's interest in historical research and preservation has reconnected K-State with the nearly forgotten local legacies of Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau. He has worked tirelessly to uncover, synthesize, and preserve the history of both chapters. His efforts have included interviewing past advisors, meticulously processing, preserving, and archiving thousands of documents, and authoring a historical website detailing the history of Kansas Gamma and the Epsilon Chapter.
- Nick's commitment to the revitalization of the Kansas Gamma Chapter is unprecedented, and his dedication to service extends to his formal roles within Tau Beta Pi. In his [REDACTED] of membership, he has never missed a service project, has led multiple phases of the chapter's major and often turbulent restructuring, and has devoted thousands of hours of hearty participation to the chapter's work as he swore to do during his initiation. He also holds lofty goals for what he hopes to accomplish in his future roles of service to the Association.

3 — BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Prior to enrolling as an engineering student, Nick accumulated a wide range of experiences. Originally from the large suburb of Overland Park, Kansas, he escaped an abusive home and entered foster care [REDACTED] moving 15 times before aging out [REDACTED]. After relocating to the small town of Parker, Kansas, he graduated high school and quickly became an active member of the community. In Parker, he was known for independently performing acts of service, such as cleaning the road ditches near the trash compactor and assisting with citywide cleanups — efforts recognized by the attached thank you note.

[REDACTED] he served as Secretary of the Board of Directors for Linn County Library District #1, where he advocated for Parker's library expansion project, which ultimately more than doubled the library's footprint. [REDACTED] he volunteered with Linn County Rural Fire Department, Station #940, responding to hundreds of calls, including grass, brush, and structure fires, vehicular crashes, medical emergencies, and storm recovery efforts.

[REDACTED] Nick also served as a 911 Dispatcher for the Linn County Sheriff's Office, where he worked to improve processes and increase the department's effectiveness in handling calls for service. His original career goal was to become a police officer, but due to his foster care background, this path was ultimately closed to him. Devastated, he turned to college as an alternative and chose engineering — driven by a desire to learn about electronics and rebuild the corded analog car phone in his 1997 BMW.

Over the years, Nick also developed construction skills by working on projects for his grandmother and other community members, eventually building an entire shop by hand in his backyard. His biggest regret, however, was installing 30 squares of shingles by hand in the middle of July — a task he vows never to repeat. A hands-on learner at heart, Nick refuses to let fear of the unknown hold him back. He embraces fear and sees challenges as life's greatest opportunities for growth.

4 — FOSTERING A SPIRIT OF LIBERAL CULTURE

The concept of liberal culture in engineering challenges the traditional view of engineers as purely technical problem-solvers. Instead, it envisions engineers as well-rounded professionals who combine technical proficiency with intellectual curiosity, cultural awareness, ethical responsibility, and a deep sense of social engagement. Nick Divilbiss' journey through Kansas State University embodies this vision, where his time as a student has been marked by an unrelenting commitment to community, personal growth, and the cultivation of humanistic values within his engineering environment.

Fostering Success and Advocacy for Marginalized Students

Nick's first major contribution to liberal culture at K-State emerged from his own personal story — navigating life after aging out of the foster care system. Rather than leaving that traumatic experience behind, Nick turned it into a catalyst for change. [REDACTED] he was a founding member of Fostering Success, an organization supporting fellow students with foster care backgrounds. This initiative reflects the essence of liberal culture: Compassion, community-building, and the recognition that engineers must consider the social systems that shape lives beyond the classroom. Nick's leadership in Fostering Success was deeply personal and hands-on. He attended every meeting, opened his home for social gatherings, and provided mentoring. Through these efforts, Nick cultivated an environment of belonging, resilience, and mutual support, ensuring that students with similar life experiences had a voice and a community to rely upon. Even after the organization dissolved due to administrative roadblocks, Nick's contributions left a lasting impact by helping to normalize the conversation around foster care experiences and the challenges faced by non-traditional students. This highlights Nick's understanding that engineers do not exist in isolation from society — they may emerge from diverse backgrounds, and their success depends not just on technical skill but on how well institutions recognize and support their holistic development.

Phi Alpha Epsilon and Environmental Stewardship

Nick's leadership in Phi Alpha Epsilon, Kansas State's architectural engineering honor society, further evidences his commitment to fostering liberal culture through environmental responsibility and civic engagement. As Membership Coordinator [REDACTED] Nick built on his service experience with highway cleanups through Tau Beta Pi, and independently fostered Phi Alpha Epsilon's commitment to the Kansas Adopt-A-Highway program, securing the adoption of a two-mile stretch of State Highway 113 (Seth Child Road). Under Nick's leadership, the chapter conducted its first-ever highway cleanup, collecting 87 bags of trash in one afternoon and establishing a two-year commitment to maintaining the highway section, which had not been cleaned in many years. Even after stepping down at the end of his term, Nick continued to participate in and promote these cleanups, demonstrating that service and environmental responsibility are ongoing commitments, not one-time projects. By committing the local honor society to this responsibility, Nick modeled how engineers must actively participate in environmental stewardship — understanding that engineers operate within broader ecological systems and that engineers have a duty to mitigate their footprint. His leadership fostered an ethic of care for public spaces, integrating environmental responsibility into the cultural fabric of Phi Alpha Epsilon.

Alt-Break Trips and Humanitarian Engineering Engagement

[REDACTED] Nick actively participated in alternative break service trips organized by K-State's student chapter of the Association of General Contractors, where he applied his construction skills to disaster recovery and housing reconstruction efforts. Over the course of four trips — Hammond, Louisiana [REDACTED], Mayfield, Kentucky [REDACTED], and Longmont, Colorado [REDACTED] — Nick contributed over 500 hours towards hands-on service, rebuilding homes, and directly engaging with affected residents. These experiences shaped Nick's understanding of the AEC industry's human impact, instilling empathy for those living with the consequences of environmental and structural vulnerabilities.

4 — FOSTERING A SPIRIT OF LIBERAL CULTURE

Additionally, he is currently downsizing and donating his personal tools and construction supplies to the student chapter of AGC. His willingness to donate his tools for future service trips further reflects his belief that engineers have an ethical duty to use their resources to best serve communities in need.

Transformative Teaching and Student Engagement

Nick is high performing student; his educational philosophy extends into his role as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for Statics — [REDACTED]. Far beyond the expected duties of grading and answering student questions, Nick has analyzed weaknesses, developed new teaching methods, and collaborated closely with Professor Larson to refine the curriculum and assess learning outcomes. His creation of a pilot recitation program [REDACTED] offering twice-weekly evening sessions, demonstrates Nick's belief that effective engineering education requires flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness to diverse learning styles. His approach to teaching embraces storytelling, analogy, and real-world contextualization. When explaining documentation practices, Nick has used the analogy of defending calculations in a future courtroom scenario, making clear the real-world stakes of precision and integrity. When students rely too heavily on online tutorials, Nick has compared learning engineering to working out at the gym — watching others lift does not build strength. These methods, drawn from human experiences and Nick's interest in psychology, rather than technical manuals, reflect Nick's understanding that engineering education must connect to broader human values — responsibility, integrity, and personal accountability. His teaching philosophy centers on conceptual mastery over memorization, emphasizing how technical knowledge exists within broader ethical and social contexts.

National Outreach and Cross-Cultural Connection

Nick's *Bentspedition*, a self-funded journey to visit every Tau Beta Pi chapter in the continental United States, Puerto Rico, and Washington D.C., (and eventually all chapters) serves as one of the most vivid examples of his commitment to the furtherance of liberal culture in and beyond Tau Beta Pi. By truck-dwelling and immersing himself in diverse cultural realities across the country (and in Canada), Nick developed a first-hand understanding of how regional cultures and social dynamics shape the experiences of engineering students. The project further informed him of the diverse array of factors defining the human condition across socioeconomic barriers. His (attached) reflections, published in *The Bent*, bridge the gap between personal storytelling and professional insight in a magazine often focusing on the latter, showing how engineers can share perspectives, and cultivate cross-cultural understanding. Through his journey, Nick embodied the spirit of curiosity and cultural exchange — pillars of liberal culture. As the first student member of Tau Beta Pi to publish feature articles in *The Bent* in at least 50 years, his reflections increase the relevance of its content to students, intending to inspire them as evidenced by the challenge given in his first article's conclusion: "Whether you're interested in pursuing a Bentspedition or not, it is my hope that this story will inspire you to set a goal and accomplish it despite all obstacles."

Leadership through Historical Preservation

Nick's transformational presidency of Tau Beta Pi's Kansas Gamma Chapter [REDACTED] further exemplifies his commitment to fostering liberal culture at Kansas State University — particularly in the realm of historical preservation. Recognizing that institutional memory is often lost in student organizations and that much of the chapter's records had likely been discarded or misplaced, Nick has dedicated over 500 hours to reconstructing Kansas Gamma's history, travelling to Headquarters in [REDACTED] where he remained for five days and reviewed every issue of Sigma Tau's *The Pyramid* magazine from 1905-1974 and every issue of *The Bent* and *The Council Bulletin* from 1970 onward, read every letter in Headquarters' correspondence files for Kansas Gamma, and photographed over 4,000 microfiche records to rebuild a complete membership roll of K-State's former Epsilon Chapter of Sigma

4 — FOSTERING A SPIRIT OF LIBERAL CULTURE

Tau. Locally, he helped interview past advisors, reviewed every relevant file in K-State's historical archives, created an online repository on Archive.org, and independently constructed a 91-page historical website detailing the comprehensive stories of both Kansas Gamma and the Epsilon Chapter within the social and historical contexts of Kansas State University and the surrounding Manhattan community. This effort reflects Nick's belief that understanding the past enriches the present and informs the future. By reconnecting Kansas State University with the legacies of both Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau, Nick fostered a sense of cultural continuity, pride, and historical awareness — key elements of a liberal education that values history, identity, and collective memory.

Reinventing Leadership Structures

Nick's efforts to revitalize Kansas Gamma from its dormancy into a vibrant, engaged chapter reflect his deep commitment to democratizing leadership structures and fostering collaborative governance. After early missteps in leadership strategy, Nick evolved his approach to shared governance, creating director positions, and empowering them with sovereignty and full ownership of their committee work. Eventually, he recognized that members' personal ownership of the chapter's successes (and failures) was impossible to achieve without a structure of governance prioritizing democratic principles. Thus, [REDACTED] he led a major reorganization of the chapter's bylaws and policies, redefining membership duties and the chapter's structure such that the active membership now possesses ultimate decision-making powers through biweekly regular meetings. Nick vowed to stand for the chapter's future as president during this turbulent process, even if it meant standing alone. His efforts emphasized shared ownership and distributed leadership — a microcosm of liberal culture's emphasis on participatory citizenship. An important defining factor about Nick's approach to leadership, and his personality in general, is his humility. He often self-reflects and is able and willing to recognize his mistakes.

Conclusion — Ethical Leadership in Action

Whether revitalizing student organizations, preserving their history, mentoring his peers, or fostering national dialogue among engineering students, Nick has consistently embodied the principles of liberal culture as a member of Tau Beta Pi. He has shown that engineering excellence is inseparable from ethical responsibility, historical consciousness, and active social engagement. Nick's story demonstrates that the most effective engineers are those who understand the broader human context of their work — who embrace intellectual curiosity, social awareness, and a commitment to improving both their profession and the communities they serve. Through personal resilience, bold leadership, and unwavering dedication to service, Nick Divilbiss has exemplified how liberal culture can thrive within engineering education. His legacy at Kansas State University reflects not just technical accomplishment but a transformative vision for what it means to be an engineer — one who builds not just structures, but stronger communities, deeper knowledge, and a more compassionate world.

5 — PARTICIPATION IN TAU BETA PI ACTIVITIES

The Kansas Gamma Chapter

Since his initiation into the Kansas Gamma Chapter [REDACTED], Nick Divilbiss has demonstrated a sustained commitment to both the success and cultural enrichment of the chapter. Through an extensive range of initiatives and programming, Nick has exemplified how an engineer can embody the spirit of liberal culture. Nick's formal leadership journey began shortly after his initiation, when he was elected Treasurer for the [REDACTED] term. In this role, he handled not only the chapter's finances but also laid the groundwork for future transformative leadership by creating the chapter's Canvas course, which was its first successful attempt at a formalized communication platform and is now the administrative platform of the chapter's points-system. In April 2023, Nick was elected President, and his second term will end [REDACTED]. As President, Nick has invested over 500 hours in historical research and preservation, 450 hours in administrative leadership, 280 hours in chapter development, 200 hours in candidacy processes, and 160 hours in service projects, all while fostering a culture of introspection, transparency, and creative problem-solving amongst the officers and general members. He reinstated biweekly general body meetings to provide every member with a voice in chapter governance. Nick's empowerment of directors to develop their own initiatives led to the successful execution of the chapter's first-annual Engineering Formal dance in [REDACTED] — a public event for all engineering students at which over 250 people were in attendance — the efficacy of Nick's leadership capabilities was made evident by the fact that the project was developed and executed without his direct oversight.

Annual Conventions & District Conferences

Nick's work extends beyond his chapter. He has played an active role in Association- and District-wide activities, devoting over 380 hours in total to service and participation in annual Conventions [REDACTED] and in District 9 Conferences in [REDACTED]. At [REDACTED] Convention, Nick served as a co-chair of the Program Review Committee, where his leadership and diligence helped secure the first-ever approval of two robotics programs. [REDACTED] he returned to Convention as chair of the Public Relations Committee, where he employed innovative, AI-driven brainstorming exercises to encourage creative ideation and develop unprecedented solutions, such as the new mascot of Tau Beta Pi (attached), which is a metaphor for the committee members' collective impression of what the organization means to them. As chair of the Public Relations Committee, he also went above and beyond by developing his own charge and asking the committee to assess the relevance of *The Bent* to themselves and to their chapters. He discovered that no one in the room had read a physical copy of the magazine, and Headquarters was provided with the committee's findings which he hopes will help guide future editorial decisions.

The Bent, Student Advisory Board, District 9 Director

Nick's passion for storytelling manifests in his work with Pat and Dylan on the *Bentspedition*, and he now advocates for more student input into editorial direction of *The Bent* magazine to foster a more inclusive and representative cultural record for Tau Beta Pi. Nick's role as a member of the Student Advisory Board [REDACTED], though admittedly hindered ineffective by the increasing demands of his leadership role within Kansas Gamma, reflects his ongoing desire to serve and ensure that student input is communicated effectively with Headquarters. His upcoming role as a Director of District 9 ([REDACTED]) further underscores his commitment to nurturing the next generation of Tau Bates. He has already assumed some actions of a district director by regularly attending and actively participating in nearby chapters' initiation ceremonies and with his recent initiative to transition the Kansas Alpha Chapter back to in-person ceremonies. Furthermore, he plans to expand the Association by exploring the formation of the Kansas Delta Chapter at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. His Tau Beta Pi legacy is one of service, sacrifice, and strategic envisioning.

NICHOLAS RODERICK DIVILBISS

EDUCATION

B.S./M.S. Architectural Engineering – Kansas State University

B.S./M.S. – May 2024/2025

- Courses: Steel I & II, Concrete I & II, Timber & Masonry Design, Loads, Soil Mechanics

EXPERIENCE

Structural Engineering Intern – Thornton Thomasetti,

- Aiding with the designing of structural steel buildings
- Created MathCAD files to expedite the designing of structural steel stairs

Undergraduate Research Assistant – Kansas State University

- Analyzed flexural behavior of concrete sections with CFRP
- Modeled non-linear hysteretic moment-curvature responses using Excel

MEP Engineering Intern – Orazem & Scalora Eng. PA,

- Drafted building plans and details with Autodesk software (AutoCAD, Revit)

Firefighter – Linn County, KS Rural Fire Dept.

- Protected citizens' lives and property

Real Estate Salesperson – Crown Realty,

- Communicated with clients to determine their needs and motivations

911 Dispatcher – Linn County, KS Sheriff's Office

- Communicated effectively and trained faster than any previous employee

CERTIFICATIONS

Fundamentals of Engineering (F.E.) Exam

Passed,

PUBLICATIONS

[BENTSPEDITION](#), A 'Monumental' Adventure, Tau Beta Pi's *The Bent* magazine, pp. 40-46

Summer 2024

A [BENTSPEDITION UPDATE](#), Tau Beta Pi's *The Bent* magazine, p. 43

Winter 2025

INVOLVEMENT

President – Kansas Gamma Chapter, Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society

- Visiting 49 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, & the Middle East for an Association-wide project
- Eradicating collective underrepresentation with *The Visibility Project*
- Researching; [publishing a full history of Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau at K-State](#)
- Publishing magazine articles on the international Bent-O-Rama project
- Recruiting new members and advisors and honoring outstanding faculty members
- Implementing a culture of introspection, continuous improvement, and involvement
- Resurrected K-State's annual spring engineering formal: 250+ attended
- Rebranded Kansas Gamma as an active chapter serving K-State and the community
- Cochaired the Program Review Committee at the National Convention

Treasurer – Structural Engineers Assoc. of Kansas and Missouri (K-State Chapter)

- Fundraised; promoted structural engineering to students at K-State

Member – Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

Member – Phi Alpha Epsilon Honor Society

- Founded a thrice-yearly highway cleanup project as Membership Director

Member – Tri-Alpha First-Generation Honor Society

Member – Association of General Contractors

- Rebuilt homes in: Hammond, LA Mayfield, KY

Member – Fostering Success

- Supporting other former foster youths so they succeed in college

HONORS / AWARDS

Graduation honors – Summa Cum Laude

Anderson Senior Award for Outstanding Inspiration

Kansas State University Engineering Dean's List

ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT
REMOVED FROM RECORD
(FERPA)

March 21, 2024



Dear Nicholas:

On behalf of the K-State Alumni Association and its members of the selection committee, I want to officially congratulate you on being selected for the **2024 Anderson Senior Awards**! The Alumni Association is proud to recognize several outstanding students this year. Below are this year's recipients and their corresponding awards.

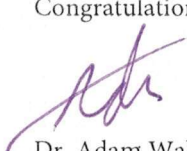
- Anderson Senior Award for Outstanding Service: **Hattie Polson**, *Agriculture Economics*
- Anderson Senior Award for Outstanding Academics: **Natalie Nusz**, *Political Science*
- Anderson Senior Award for Outstanding Inspiration: **Nicholas Divilbiss**, *Architectural Engineering*
- Anderson Senior Awards for Outstanding Leadership: **Emily Howard**, *Professional Strategic Selling*
- Graduate Student Award for Outstanding Leadership & Service: **Megan Bourns**, *Agronomy*
- Graduate Student Award for Outstanding Academics: **Fan Liu**, *Chemical Engineering*
- Tony Jurich Community Commitment and Leadership Student Awards – Graduate: **Janvi Aggarwal**, *Mass Communications*
- Tony Jurich Community Commitment and Leadership Student Awards – Undergraduate: **Hattie Polson**, *Agriculture Economics*

We are excited to honor you and recognize all the student award recipients at a luncheon at the K-State Alumni Center in the Tadtman Board Room. This event will be held on **Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 11:30am**. Please join us and the other recipients as we celebrate your years at K-State. The Dean of your college and your award nominator will be invited to the luncheon. Feel free to invite up to two additional guests (parents or friends). During the awards luncheon, you'll be given the opportunity to speak briefly about your plans after graduation. **Please confirm your attendance at this event by responding to the RSVP form by April 19, 2024. This RSVP will be sent in a separate email.**

Enclosed please find a copy of your nominations. The years of time and energy that you have dedicated to Kansas State University are appreciated by your peers, your faculty, and the university as a whole. We also hope that you will join fellow graduating students at **Grad Bash on Thursday, May 2, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.** This event will be held at the Alumni Center. All graduating students will be invited and you can receive additional information at www.k-state.com/GradBash.

On behalf of the K-State Alumni Association, we thank you for being such an outstanding member of the student body and remind you that your years of being a K-Stater have only just begun. The K-State family includes alumni across the country and around the world – wherever your future takes you, we'll be there! Welcome to life as a future K-State Alumni – please stay in touch.

Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Adam'.

Dr. Adam Walker '04, '09
President and CEO
K-State Alumni Association

*Congrats!
So proud.*

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Tamie'.

Tamie Redding '86
Associate Director of Student Programs
K-State Alumni Association

Enclosure

Anderson Awards for Outstanding Seniors

Nomination Form 2024

Nominee's Name: Nicholas Divilbiss

Phone: [REDACTED]

Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2024

Email: [REDACTED]

Which award do you believe this nominee is best qualified to receive? (circle one)

Inspiration

Highlight this nominee's leadership roles at K-State: (max. 250 words)

Nick has had many leadership roles while at KSU. All of these can be found in his resume. However, I want to discuss the leadership that is not on his resume. Those are the ones that he shows in the classroom. He regularly leads study sessions for his fellow classmates. He not only wants to do well in his classes but he wants to see those around him succeed as well. Another role that Nick has taken much pride in is his quest to strengthen KSU's engineering chapter of Tau Beta Pi by helping all the other student organizations within the College of Engineering. His plan is to furnish every organization with a permanent display case in the main engineering building to eliminate the effective invisibility which some student groups suffer from. He believes this will improve community, belonging, and student pride in the college. He believes this will improve both student retention and recruitment efforts which will greatly benefit the college. He is also providing leadership for Tau Beta Pi at the national level. He spent most of his winter break driving across the eastern part of the United States visiting other Tau Beta Pi student chapters. This endeavor was to develop a unique social media content to keep local members engaged in Tau Beta Pi activities, attract national attention to the chapter's activities, and to cement into members' minds the concept that Tau Beta Pi is a massive network of high achieving engineers all over the country.

Highlight this nominee's campus and community service: (max. 250 words)

Nick is not only a member of many service organizations but he is an active member of many service organizations. If it is listed on his resume that means he is fully engaged and actively participating in many ways. The ones that stand out to me are the numerous highway cleanups he attends in the Manhattan area, the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) alternative winter break trips where the student group spends one week during winter break helping rebuild communities that have been hit by natural disasters, and his countless hours he has spent with Tau Beta Pi at both a local and national level. For the AGC service trips the group helps repair damaged houses and other structures. The work that is done can be compared to Habitat for Humanity. Nick takes great pride in giving back to others and helping out when needed. On a personal note Nick is a TA for one of the classes that I teach and is very dedicated in helping the students learn and understand the material.

Highlight this nominee's significant academic accomplishments: (max. 250 words)

[REDACTED] That alone speaks for itself as a very significant achievement. I think the part of this achievement that gets overlooked is the path he took to get here. Nick was a foster child during his secondary education years. There was a time in his life when going to college was really not going to be an option for him. During his high school years, he lived in ten plus different "homes". The odds of him just going to college were pretty low at this time due to a multitude of factors. He not only turned his life around, but did so while maintaining [REDACTED] at KSU along with the numerous extracurricular activities that he has

been involved with during his time here. I think other students see the past struggles that he has overcome and the successes that he has had as motivation for them and that success can come even after some hardship. His story from where he was to where he is now is truly inspiring to all.

Highlight any other special honors or awards: (max. 250 words)

As shown by his resume Nick has had many honors and awards. The one that I wish to discuss is the one that the faculty of the GE Johnson Department of Architectural Engineering and Construction Science bestowed upon him which is not on his resume. The department just completed renovations and had a ribbon cutting ceremony [REDACTED] At this event many of the donors showed up to see the newly renovated spaces. At this time several key members that made the renovations possible gave a short speech. Nick was one of two students selected by the department to speak of the event. This was a great honor as the department had many great candidates to choose from but he was selected due to his grades and service not only to the department but the university as a whole.

Explain how you know this nominee: (max. 250 words)

Nick is currently one of my graduate students. I have known him for several years. I first got to know him in one of my classes. He has been one of the highest performing students that I have ever had and did not just want to get a good grade but he wanted to truly understand the concepts that were being taught. Since then I have had him in one other class which he performed at an extremely high level. Further, [REDACTED] he has assisted me in teaching a large lecture class as a TA. For this he helps grade homework, holds office hours, and fills in when I am away from campus. He will graduate this Spring with his undergraduate degree and after that he will continue on here at KSU while he works towards his Master's degree under my direction.

What has been this nominee's impact on you/on this campus? (max. 250 words)

Nick has made such a positive impact on this campus. He helps students in and out of the classroom. This help is in the form of assisting classmates that are struggling or other students that he tutors. His leadership roles on various campus organizations are second to none. He is always willing to donate his time to assist others. All of these activities have been noted above or can be found in his resume.

Why is this nominee deserving of an Anderson Award? (max. 250 words)

It is my honor to nominate Nick for this prestigious award. I can't think of a more deserving candidate than Nick. He has demonstrated exceptional academic performance within KSU's Architectural Engineering program while staying active within extracurricular university and national level activities. In closing, I believe he would be the perfect recipient of the Inspiration Anderson Senior Award for Outstanding Inspiration for all the reasons listed above. I am sure all his peers along with all the faculty and staff that have worked with him would agree. The way he turned his life around after his troubled upbringing is truly inspirational to all. Not many could go through what he did and be able to come out on top. With that I thank you all for taking him into consideration.

Nomination submitted by:

[REDACTED]

Anderson Awards for Outstanding Seniors

Nomination Form 2024

Nominee's Name: Nicholas Divilbiss

Phone:

Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2024

Email:

Which award do you believe this nominee is best qualified to receive? (circle one)

Inspiration

Highlight this nominee's leadership roles at K-State: (max. 250 words)

Nicholas has exhibited exemplary leadership at Kansas State University (K-State) through this presidency of the Kansas Gamma Chapter of the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society. His leadership is characterized by strategic vision and proactive initiatives, including efforts to address underrepresentation among college organizations, revive the annual spring dance for the Kansas State College of Engineering, and conduct extensive research resulting in the publication of a comprehensive history of Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau at Kansas State. Furthermore, he has demonstrated effective recruitment strategies, implemented a culture of introspection and continuous improvement within the chapter, and successfully rebranded Kansas Gamma as an active chapter serving both K-State and the wider community. His role as co-chair of the 2023 Program Review Committee further illustrates their ability to contribute to broader institutional initiatives, highlighting their adeptness in navigating complex decision-making processes and fostering collaboration across diverse stakeholders.

Highlight this nominee's campus and community service: (max. 250 words)

In addition to his leadership roles, Nicholas has made significant contributions to campus and community service. As Treasurer of the Structural Engineers Association of Kansas and Missouri (KSU Chapter), he fostered interest in structural engineering while managing finances. His involvement in rebuilding homes with the Association of General Contractors showcased a tangible impact on communities in Hammond, LA, and Mayfield, KY. Additionally, as Membership Director of Phi Alpha Epsilon Honor Society, he spearheaded a biannual highway cleanup project, demonstrating commitment to environmental stewardship. Moreover, his membership in Fostering Success reflects his dedication to supporting fellow former foster youths in college, providing crucial resources and guidance. Furthermore, as a member of Tri-Alpha First-Generation Honor Society, he collaborates with fellow first-generation college students, leveraging his experiences to foster a supportive community. Through diverse engagement in campus and community service initiatives, Nicholas exemplifies a commitment to making a positive difference beyond academia, embodying compassion and dedication to uplifting marginalized communities.

Highlight this nominee's significant academic accomplishments: (max. 250 words)

Nicholas, currently pursuing a concurrent Bachelors and Masters degree in Architectural Engineering, exemplifies outstanding academic achievement. This outcome of his rigorous coursework, alongside his significant leadership involvement, showcases not only his academic success but also his exceptional time management skills and the depth of his dedication to his college career. Despite facing challenges stemming from his upbringing in foster care and being a first-generation college student, Nicholas' academic journey reflects remarkable resilience and determination. His ability to excel academically while navigating personal obstacles speaks volumes about his perseverance and commitment to his

educational goals. Through his academic accomplishments and unwavering resilience, Nicholas not only demonstrates intellectual excellence but also serves as an inspiration to others facing similar challenges, embodying the transformative power of education and determination.

Highlight any other special honors or awards: (max. 250 words)

Nicholas has garnered notable honors and awards throughout his academic journey, underscoring their dedication and scholarly excellence. At Kansas State University, he has been consistently listed on the University Honors and Engineering Dean's Lists [REDACTED] showcasing his sustained commitment to academic distinction. Prior to his enrollment at Kansas State, he was similarly recognized on the Honors list at Pittsburg State University [REDACTED] demonstrating his academic success across different institutions. Furthermore, his exceptional achievements have been acknowledged through various engineering scholarships. These include the Tau Beta Pi national scholarship for [REDACTED] the AISC Education Foundation national scholarship [REDACTED] the OPUS Group national scholarship [REDACTED] and the ACEC of Kansas state scholarship [REDACTED]. These prestigious awards not only affirm Nicholas' academic excellence but also recognize his potential and promise within the engineering field. Through his receipt of these esteemed honors and awards, Nicholas continues to distinguish himself as a scholar of exceptional merit and potential, poised to make significant contributions to their field.

Explain how you know this nominee: (max. 250 words)

I have had the pleasure of knowing Nicholas through our shared membership in Tau Beta Pi, where I have observed his outstanding dedication and contributions firsthand. Despite being in different departments within the College of Engineering, Nicholas's exceptional level of involvement and determination in spearheading new initiatives has made a lasting impression on me. As the Engineering Student Council President, I've had the opportunity to collaborate with Nicholas and other student organization presidents on various college events. Among them, Nicholas has particularly stood out for his proactive approach and commitment to enhancing the college experience for all students, which mirrors my own enthusiasm for creating impactful events. For instance, our collaboration on the upcoming Engineering Formal, where the Engineering Student Council is assisting Tau Beta Pi in hosting the event, highlights Nicholas's exemplary leadership. Notably, we've even aligned this year's Engineering Week activities around the Engineering Formal, underscoring its significance within our college community. Despite not having classes together, our shared dedication to fostering a vibrant college environment has brought us together in collaboration, and I look forward to continuing our partnership in driving positive change within our academic community.

What has been this nominee's impact on you/on this campus? (max. 250 words)

Nicholas' impact on both me and our campus community has been profound and multifaceted. His role as an undergraduate research assistant at Kansas State University showcases his analytical prowess and commitment to advancing knowledge in structural engineering, influencing my own approach to research and academic inquiry. Additionally, his leadership roles within Tau Beta Pi and other organizations have significantly enriched campus life, shaping my own leadership style and approach to community engagement. From advocating for inclusivity to revitalizing campus events, his proactive approach has fostered a culture of engagement and continuous improvement, motivating me to take similar initiatives within our campus community. Lastly, his involvement in supporting former foster youths through Fostering Success showcases his compassion and dedication to making a positive impact, serving as a reminder of the importance of empathy and social responsibility in our academic pursuits. Overall, Nicholas' multifaceted contributions, coupled with his unwavering commitment to academic excellence and service, have not only influenced my own personal and professional growth but have also inspired me to strive for excellence and create positive change within our campus community.

Why is this nominee deserving of an Anderson Award? (max. 250 words)

Nicholas' journey from a former foster youth and first-generation college student to a standout leader and scholar epitomizes resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment. His academic excellence, including [REDACTED] and significant research contributions, underscores his intellectual prowess and dedication to excellence. Moreover, his leadership roles within Tau Beta Pi and other organizations showcase his ability to inspire and unite others towards common goals. Whether advocating for inclusivity, revitalizing campus events, or supporting former foster youths, he consistently demonstrates a commitment to making a positive impact. His personal story serves as a powerful source of inspiration, inspiring others to overcome adversity and pursue their dreams with determination. In every aspect of his journey, Nicholas embodies the qualities of

Nomination submitted by:

[REDACTED]

Anderson Awards for Outstanding Seniors

Nomination Form 2024

Nominee's Name: Nicholas Divilbiss Phone: [REDACTED]

Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2024 Email: [REDACTED]

Which award do you believe this nominee is best qualified to receive? (circle one)

Inspiration

Highlight this nominee's leadership roles at K-State: (max. 250 words)

Nicholas Roderick Divilbiss has demonstrated exceptional leadership at Kansas State University through various roles including: - President of the Kansas Gamma Chapter, Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society [REDACTED] leading efforts to eradicate underrepresentation, revive the College of Engineering's spring dance, research and publish a history of Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau, and organize the Bent-O-Rama by summer '25. He has logged over 1200 hours of Tau Beta Pi related activities. - Treasurer of the Phi Alpha Epsilon Honorary where he took charge of communicating with me and others that were nominated to be in PAE [REDACTED]

Highlight this nominee's campus and community service: (max. 250 words)

Nick Divilbiss has been very actively involved in campus and community service as a: - Member of Fostering Success [REDACTED] supporting former foster youths to succeed in college. - Participant with AGC as he rebuilt homes in Hammond, LA [REDACTED] and Mayfield, KY [REDACTED] - Founded a thrice-yearly highway cleanup project [REDACTED] for PAE honorary as Membership Director.

Highlight this nominee's significant academic accomplishments: (max. 250 words)

Nick Divilbiss has excelled academically, pursuing a B.S./M.S. in Architectural Engineering (structural) [REDACTED] expected to graduate in May 2025. His commitment to academic excellence is further evidenced by his passing of the FE exam [REDACTED] Throughout his academic journey, Nick has been consistently recognized for his achievements, receiving various honors such as the Kansas State University Honors [REDACTED] and making the Engineering Dean's List [REDACTED] Additionally, he has been awarded several prestigious engineering scholarships, including the Tau Beta Pi national scholarship [REDACTED] the AISC Education Foundation national scholarship [REDACTED] the OPUS Group national scholarship [REDACTED] and the ACEC of Kansas state scholarship. These accomplishments are a testament to Nick's dedication, hard work, and outstanding academic performance.

Highlight any other special honors or awards: (max. 250 words)

Kansas State University Honors [REDACTED] Kansas State University Engineering Dean's List [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Pittsburg State University Honors [REDACTED]

Explain how you know this nominee: (max. 250 words)

I know Nick Divilbiss through our shared pursuit of a B.S. in Architectural Engineering at Kansas State University and our membership in the Phi Alpha Epsilon Honor Society. Our connection extends beyond our major, as we have both been actively involved in the College of Engineering. Through this involvement, I've had the chance to witness Nick's leadership as President of the Kansas Gamma Chapter of the Tau Beta Pi

Engineering Honor Society. His commitment to improving the engineering community and fostering inclusivity is evident in his role, providing me with a deeper understanding of his character and impact on our campus.

What has been this nominee's impact on you/on this campus? (max. 250 words)

Nick Divilbiss's impact on me has been profound and multi-faceted. When I was preparing to take my FE exam for the first time, Nick went out of his way to assist me in finding resources and study materials. His willingness to lend a helping hand without judgment has been a consistent theme in our interactions. As a classmate, I've seen firsthand how Nick's work ethic is impeccable - his assignments are always flawless, and he maintains perfect attendance. This sets a high standard for me, pushing me to strive for excellence in my own work and attendance. What truly inspires me about Nick is his resilience and determination. Learning about his background as a former foster kid with a challenging childhood, I'm amazed at how he doesn't let those circumstances define him. Instead, he shows up every day as the best version of himself, working hard and excelling academically and in his extracurricular activities. Seeing Nick overcome obstacles and achieve so much despite his past encourages me to persevere and show up with the same level of dedication and determination, regardless of the challenges I may face. He serves as a constant reminder that circumstances do not determine our success; it's our attitude and effort that truly matter.

Why is this nominee deserving of an Anderson Award? (max. 250 words)

Nick Divilbiss absolutely deserves an Anderson Award for Outstanding Inspiration. He's been a standout leader on our campus, actively working to make our engineering community more inclusive and engaging. From his involvement in various student organizations to his dedication to academic excellence, Nick sets a high standard for all of us. And it's not just about leadership - he's acing his academics, scoring scholarships left and right. But what really stands out is how he's always there for others. When I was stressing about the FE exam, Nick was the first to help me out with resources and tips. I'm truly impressed by his drive and determination. He's a true role model for all of us, showing that success is about hard work and making a difference, no matter where you start from. Nick's impact goes beyond just grades or titles - he's making our campus better, and that's why he's definitely deserving of an Anderson Award.

Nomination submitted by:

[Redacted signature area]

Anderson Awards for Outstanding Seniors

Nomination Form 2024

Nominee's Name: Nick Divilbiss **Phone:** [REDACTED]

Anticipated Graduation Date: Summer 2024 **Email:** [REDACTED]

Which award do you believe this nominee is best qualified to receive? (circle one)

Inspiration

Highlight this nominee's leadership roles at K-State: (max. 250 words)

President, Membership Director - Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, Kansas Gamma Chapter SGA Senator
Treasurer - Structural Engineering Assoc. of Kansas and Missouri Member: Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Phi
Alpha Epsilon Honor Society, Tri-Alfa First-Generation Honor Society, Associated General Contractors of
Kansas KSU Student Chapter, Fostering Success

Highlight this nominee's campus and community service: (max. 250 words)

As President of Tau Beta Pi (TBP), Nick is petitioning on behalf of all college student organizations to address chronic underrepresentation of students within the college of engineering (COE). This initiative is intended to eradicate the perceived invisibility of students' actual experiences within these sponsored organizations in an effort to increase student recruitment/retention within the college. He has taken the lead to resurrect the COE annual spring dance, he is researching and publishing the complete histories of the TBP and Sigma Tau organizations at K-State, and he writes magazine articles for the TBP publication The Bent. Nick's current project is called the Bent-O-Rama. The original intent was to develop unique social media content to keep local members engaged in TBP activities over winter and summer breaks; to attract national attention to the chapter's activities; and to highlight that TBP is a massive, national network of high achieving engineers. Nick lived out of his truck this past winter break and drove around the U.S. in search of Bent monuments. The project has now been expanded to include visits to all 255 chapters, including Alaska, Puerto Rico, Qatar, and Dubai. The collected data will be used to complete the Bent-O-Rama website (bents.tbp.org). This site will be the ultimate marketing tool to demonstrate the scale of the TBP professional network. The summer 2025 release of The Bent will be distributed to over 95,000 people with the goal of inspiring major donors to permanently endow the K-State chapter.

Highlight this nominee's significant academic accomplishments: (max. 250 words)

[REDACTED] Accepted into K-State architectural engineering accelerated M.S.
program K-State Engineering Dean's List fall 2020-present Pittsburg State University Honors

Highlight any other special honors or awards: (max. 250 words)

Tau Beta Pi national scholarship AISC Education Foundation national scholarship OPUS Group national scholarship ACEC of Kansas state scholarship

Explain how you know this nominee: (max. 250 words)

I first became acquainted with Nick when he volunteered to participate on a week-long community service project to Hammond, Louisiana [REDACTED] that was sponsored by our department's AGC Student Chapter over winter break. This community had been devastated by a recent hurricane, and our group worked on

building low-income homes. I worked closely with Nick, one-on-one, to correct a major electrical issue at the volunteer housing facility, since he and I were the only ones with the experience to address it for them. I also worked with Nick on a similar low-income housing project the following winter break in Mayfield, Kentucky, a community that was leveled by a F-5 tornado. As department head of the GE Johnson Department of Architectural Engineering and Construction Science, it's common to see Nick's name at the top of every list submitted to me by faculty and students for awards, scholarships, and leadership recognition.

What has been this nominee's impact on you/on this campus? (max. 250 words)

Nick has been a quiet inspiration for our department. He is low key and unassuming, but he is actively involved in many events undertaken by our department and our sponsored student organizations. His maturity as a non-traditional student has had a positive impact on our student leadership. He has a work ethic like none other and it has ceased to surprise me when I continue to hear Nick's name come up among college and university leadership.

Why is this nominee deserving of an Anderson Award? (max. 250 words)

While Nick's name may be well known among our students, faculty, and college/university leadership, very few, if any, know about his personal story. One of Nick's classmates, [REDACTED] personally asked me to nominate Nick for the Anderson Inspiration Award and [REDACTED] received his permission to share his story with me. He was raised in an abusive home and ended up in foster care. His K-12 educational experience was traumatic, including poor grades, no mentors, and zero leadership experience, and it left him with no desire to further his education and no hope that he could be successful if he tried. After high school graduation he cared for his terminally ill grandmother for the final few months of her life. He worked as a 911 dispatcher and then as a realtor while pursuing his goal of becoming a sheriff's deputy once he turned 21 years old, only to find out when he was finally old enough to apply that his upbringing in an abusive home and foster care prohibited him from passing the required background check to enter law enforcement. Forced to look at different options, he opted to roll the dice and give college a try. Nick has excelled academically and personally, and is one of the most driven and motivated students with whom I have had the good fortune to interact. He is a humble but confident leader and an inspiration to me.

Nomination submitted by:

[REDACTED]

Anderson Awards for Outstanding Seniors

Nomination Form 2024

Nominee's Name: Nick Divilbiss

Phone: [REDACTED]

Anticipated Graduation Date: May 2024

Email: [REDACTED]

Which award do you believe this nominee is best qualified to receive? (circle one)

Leadership

Highlight this nominee's leadership roles at K-State: (max. 250 words)

Nick is the chapter President for the K-State Tau Beta Pi chapter. Upon taking on this leadership role, Nick discovered that K-State's chapter records had been accidentally discarded and lost. To solve this, Nick took it upon himself to travel to Tau Beta Pi's National Headquarters in Knoxville, TN to visit their file archives for the purpose of recreating the lost records for the K-State chapter. Nick spent an entire day scanning records from microfiche film to recover K-State membership information. In addition to his leadership of the KSU chapter, Nick has taken on the daunting task of personally visiting each Tau Beta Pi chapter across the United States to photo-document each chapter's Bent sculpture to complete the interactive map established by Tau Beta Pi. No one in TBP has ever undertaken this daunting task, but TBP's National office heard about Nick's efforts and they will be writing an article about his exploits. Nick has initiated activities and events at K-State with TBP and his leadership has provided a great service to Tau Beta Pi's National office.

Highlight this nominee's campus and community service: (max. 250 words)

[REDACTED] Nick volunteered his time over the winter break for week-long work service trips to help national organizations such as The Fuller Center for Housing. These trips included going to Louisiana to repair damages from Hurricane Ida and to Kentucky to repair damages from the F4 tornado that hit Mayfield, KY in December of 2021. Nick is an engineering student, but has learned a lot of construction knowledge, so he was able to provide labor, knowledge and leadership on these service trips.

Highlight this nominee's significant academic accomplishments: (max. 250 words)

I am not Nick's academic advisor, so I don't have access to his academic records. I do know he takes his coursework seriously and is known among the faculty of my department as a sharp-minded and dedicated student.

Highlight any other special honors or awards: (max. 250 words)

Unknown.

Explain how you know this nominee: (max. 250 words)

I am a professor in the GE Johnson Dept. of Architectural Engineering and Construction Science Department. Each winter break for the last 8 year, I have accompanied a group of our students on volunteer work service trips around the United States helping national organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, United Methodists Committee on Relief, and The Fuller Center for Housing. Nick has been part of our volunteer group for the last [REDACTED] giving his time and knowledge to help people in need. His great attitude, strong work ethic and sense of humor made him a terrific team member.

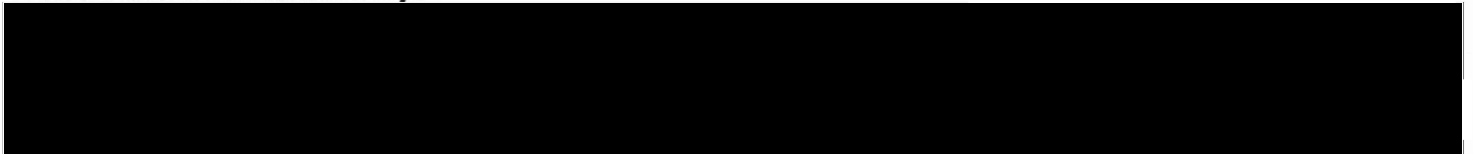
What has been this nominee's impact on you/on this campus? (max. 250 words)

Nick has stepped up in running K-State's Tau Beta Pi chapter in a strong way, recovering lost information and helping the National office to boot.

Why is this nominee deserving of an Anderson Award? (max. 250 words)

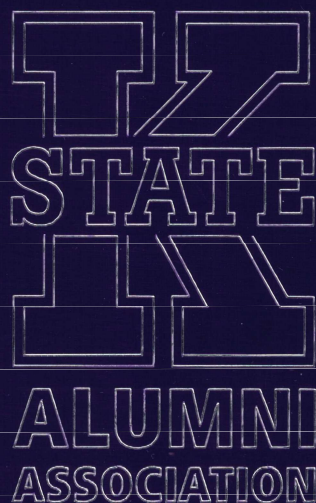
Nick is an intelligent and hardworking guy. He will make an outstanding engineer and he has given his time and resources to help others in need and Tau Beta Pi. Nick's personal background is a story of family tragedy and he has few family members left in his life. Despite these setbacks, he has worked hard to achieve the success he's earned and has shaped himself into a thoughtful and dedicated individual. I am proud of him and proud to call him my friend.

Nomination submitted by:



Anderson Senior Award
for
Outstanding Inspiration

Nicholas Divilbiss



2024 K-State Senior Awards

Nick,
Your help at the "City Wide
Clean-up" on the 15th was
greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your
continued community service.

City of Parker



Texas Gamma Bent
at Rice University.



BENTSPEDITION

A 'MONUMENTAL' ADVENTURE — BY NICHOLAS R. DIVILBISS, KANSAS GAMMA '25

INTRODUCTION

“Hello Kansas Gamma...” our Instagram followers have grown accustomed to hearing that lately. My name is Nick and I have the honor and privilege of serving as the 85th president of the Kansas Gamma Chapter at Kansas State University (K-State). Some say I’m obsessed with Bents; of that I will let you be the judge. **By March 2025, I will personally have visited every collegiate chapter in the world.** With this article, I humbly bring you: *The Bentspedition*

This is an unprecedented adventure of a scale that I’ve never experienced. However ridiculous it may seem, I can tell you wholeheartedly that it has been a life-changing experience. Technically speaking, it can be achieved by anyone with a driver’s license and a passport, and my rules are quite simple: Personally visit all active collegiate chapters; no flying unless driving is impossible; and finally, hotels are off limits.

Following these three rules, I have to date, visited 103 of 257 active collegiate chapters. That is every chapter in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia,

Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin, along with many chapters in Indiana, Ohio, Texas, and West Virginia. Geographically, much has been accomplished with more than 13,500 miles driven and 2,200 miles flown since the journey began on December 17, 2023.

I don’t wish to bore you with a complete recollection of events, so this article focuses on just a few key happenings. While reading the article, you will learn about some highlights of the Bentspedition and a few of its objectives. You will also gain insight into the KS Gamma Chapter and me. Finally, you will, in the (map) image above, see the routes traveled thus far.

A HUMBLE BEGINNING

Initially, I never intended this to be such a wild adventure. The idea to visit a few chapters arose when I decided to visit family in Raleigh, NC, for Christmas. Kansas Gamma had been encouraging its members to explore the Bent-O- Rama website (**see sidebar**

on page 42), so it was apparent that I should stop at the chapters along the way to (a) maintain our social media presence over winter break, and (b) ensure our members’ exposure to chapters around the country. I also figured that I’d investigate the schools with no listed Bent monuments to see what I could find.

FIRST DAY

If you’re wondering when the term Bentspedition came to be, I’ll tell you. I left Manhattan (Kansas, not New York) at 6:15 a.m. on December 17 and gassed up “Tortillo the Tacoma” at the Topeka rest stop on I-70 just as the sun was peeking over the horizon. It was light enough to make the first post on our chapter’s Instagram story; I pondered what to say.

In planning, I called it the “Great Kansas Gamma Bent-O-Rama Expedition of December 2023,” which didn’t exactly roll off the tongue. Hold up... Bent-O-Rama, expedition... the Bentspedition! Aha, on the side of I-70 in the middle of nowhere in Kansas, a new word was born! Then off to the KS Alpha, MO Delta, and MO Alpha Chapters I went.

I've met many wonderful people while traveling the country and the first was **Audrey P. Horner**, Missouri Alpha Chapter president at the University of Missouri (**Figure 1**). She and I met in St. Louis at Fitz's on Delmar. (Side note: I tried their key lime soda and it's incredible.) We visited the two chapters in St. Louis together, and she's a hidden Easter egg in the video taken at Washington Univ. (the MO Gamma Chapter). One can barely see her head peeking out behind a column as the camera pans around to their Bent. Together, we also experienced the first setback. The Bent monument at Missouri Epsilon (Saint Louis Univ.) was locked away inside their building; all I could see was its reflection off an interior window. How frustrating it was to be stopped, just inches short of their Bent! Partially defeated, I moved on from St. Louis, but the defeat didn't last long.

I had my first breakthrough at Southern Illinois University (SIU) in Carbondale. The IL Epsilon Chapter's Bent was the first unlisted monument that I found (**Figure 2**), and nothing will replace the satisfaction of that discovery. Let me paint a proper picture: it was below freezing with northerly wind gusts of up to 30 mph that night. I arrived just after 9:30 p.m., all alone but for the police officer watching me from across the street. Shaking in the icy wind, I snooped around for about 20 minutes. The SIU Applied Science Building looks like a 1980s architectural experiment, and I was most intrigued by the wacky structure. Less interesting was each passing minute in which I found no Bent. That's when I realized: maybe they don't have a Bent. Wait... maybe they do, and I just won't find it... Uh oh. Hope was quickly diminishing and the officer was finally circling around to confront me. That's when it happened. I found it! Excitedly, I snapped some photos, noted the Bent's coordinates, and updated KS Gamma with the great news. My flash photography combined with the miserable wind chill convinced the officer that the situation wasn't worth investigating, so with my first major victory accomplished, I pressed on towards Nashville, TN.

I pushed myself a little too far that first night, and I was lucky to make it to Nashville without falling asleep at the wheel. I arrived around 1:30 a.m., after leaving SIU at 10:00 p.m. I had planned to get a motel room, but it was way too late for that. I'll just sleep in the truck, I said. No big deal, right? Well, with no planning, it's harder than you might think to find a decent spot to park and sleep. Most places you'd like to sleep at don't allow overnight parking, and vice versa. I fueled up in midtown by Centennial Park and had zero energy to drive much further. After about 30 minutes, I found a dark and quiet spot on Parthenon Avenue just west of Oman Street. I'd never spent the night alone in a vehicle. It was terrifying and incredibly uncomfortable. I'm 6'3" and we are talking about an extended cab Tacoma with no pillows and one undersized throw blanket on an unusually cold and windy winter night.

Waking up drained from an effectively sleepless night, I was thankful to have made it through safely when the first light of day arrived the next morning. Aside from driving through the strongest crosswinds I've encountered, nothing too noteworthy happened the following day as I visited the Tennessee Beta, Eta, Zeta, Gamma, and Alabama Delta Chapters while en route to Knoxville. I don't typically drive through Huntsville and Chattanooga on the way from Nashville to Knoxville, but the scenery itself was worth the extra distance.

STUCK IN KNOXVILLE

On January 27, 1974, the KS Gamma Chapter of Tau Beta Pi was installed, and history was made when the Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Tau merged into KS Gamma immediately thereafter, in the first of such mergers. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the historic national merger. As we neared 2024, our chapter was excited to celebrate its 50th year at K-State, but that was dampened by our lack of historical knowledge. At some point, most of our records were unfortunately discarded. Furthermore, the chapter experienced a heavy turnover of advisors throughout the early 21st century. Because of these issues, we effectively



Figure 1: The Bent monument on the University of Missouri-Columbia campus.



Figure 2: The Bent monument on the Southern Illinois University (Carbondale) campus.

BENT-O-RAMA

Imagine an interactive map with which every Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Tau monument can be explored. “It’d be really great to have a website to share Bents and post where they are.” That’s what Neal T. Bussett, *CA X ’09*, thought at a District 16 meeting in 2018. He and Paul H. Kimpel, *DE A ’70*, then created the Bent-O-Rama website: bents.tbp.org

The website provides chapters with a proper place to share their history, photos of activities, goals, and information about their Bent monument(s) and/or Sigma Tau pyramid(s), if applicable.

It also allows individuals to log their personal visits and upload a picture at each monument. Much progress towards completion has been made since the site debuted in 2019, but it won’t be fully useful until all chapters have entered the details of their Bents since Tau Bates can’t log visits at icons with no information.

The KS Gamma Chapter would love to see a completed Bent-O-Rama map because it will be a useful tool in showing prospective members the grand scale of the professional network provided by Tau Beta Pi.

Figure 3: (below) A selfie taken with Executive Director Curt Gomulinski outside the TBP Headquarters in Knoxville, TN.

Figure 4: (below/right) “Tortillo the Tacoma” also known as “Hotel Tacoma” refueling in Daytona, FL.



knew nothing about our past, and it’s hard to celebrate 50 years of KS Gamma without knowledge of the chapter’s history.

To rectify this issue, I emailed Tricia Gomulinski, Director of Alumni Affairs, a few weeks before leaving Kansas. First, I asked whether TBP Headquarters (HQ) kept any permanent records for the chapters. They do. Then, I asked if it was possible for a chapter officer to comb through their chapter’s records. It is. Knowing this, I asked if I could visit HQ (**Figure 3**) for a couple days to see what I could learn about our chapter. Before leaving Nashville, I let Tricia know that I’d be in Knoxville by the end of the day and that I’d be living out of my truck. However, Tricia and Curt graciously offered one of their guest rooms to me. That was much appreciated and no offense to *Hotel Tacoma* (**Figure 4**), but beds win over passenger seats.

I knew right away that the stay in Knoxville would be fruitful when I arrived at the Gomulinski’s residence on December 18. Curt had a bound copy of *The Bent* magazines from the 1970s and flipped it open to show an article about Kansas Gamma’s installation ceremony. Sure enough, there was our first president, **John R. Schlup, Ph.D., KS G ’75**, standing next to the last president of the Epsilon Chapter, **John D. Wilson, KS G ’74**, at K-State in 1974. I had no idea just how much information there was to come.

Two days quickly evaporated as I paged through every Sigma Tau *Pyramid* magazine from 1915-74 and every copy of *The Bent* magazine from 1973 onward. It was information overload. To my great surprise, HQ had records of all important chapter reports and correspondence from the present day all the way back to 1909!



Immediately, our chapter’s origin story was transformed. We knew that the Epsilon Chapter was founded in 1912, but had no idea that K-State had tried to start the Kansas Alpha Chapter in 1909. Wow, just a few more Carnegie units in 1909 and KS Alpha would’ve lived at K-State! Then, in 1928, Kansas Beta was to be founded at K-State. Accreditation was no longer an issue and there was local support for a chapter, but the matter was dropped because of the Association’s certain belief that the Sigma Tau merger of 1928 would be approved. There was, then, no reason to start a new chapter, they said, since our Epsilon Chapter would certainly be converted into a TBP chapter that year.

I found original photographs of our installation ceremony and images and programs from the 1998 National Convention (“K-State in ’98”) hosted by KS Gamma. Curt surprised me with a flash drive containing PDFs of every handwritten KS Gamma catalog card. Also on his drive was every Sigma Tau catalog card in existence. Mind you, we have no idea when K-State lost its Sigma Tau records, so we may have a complete Epsilon membership record set for the first time in five decades. What truly blew me away though, was what I found under a tall stack of boring 1950s Sigma Tau financial records. Alone in its existence, an original hand bound March 1941 Epsilon Chapter pledge book from John M. St. John (**Figure 10, page 45**), a former mechanical engineering student at K-State.

Speaking of the Epsilon Chapter, I also aim to locate all surviving Sigma Tau monuments. Revealed to me in Knoxville were photographs of all those historic monuments across the U.S. I’ve since reached out to chapters across the country in search of any clues. My favorite Sigma Tau discoveries so far are at the WY Alpha and TX Gamma Chapters, where the bases of those chapters’ Bent monuments were formed in the shape of a Sigma Tau pyramid.

It’s tough to get strangers to take cold emails seriously; especially when asking about a monument that was probably destroyed 50 years ago. However, I did receive a response from Professor Emeritus **Raymond G. Jacquot, Ph.D., P.E., WYA ’60**.

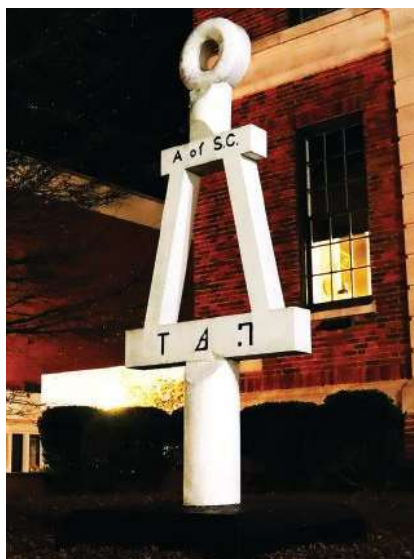


Figure 5: (left) The Bent monument on the Clemson University campus.

He seemed a bit skeptical of my inquiry at first. Through our exchange, I learned that he was a student member of Wyoming's Omega Chapter. I believe he would tell you that he was most surprised when I sent him a copy of his handwritten Sigma Tau catalog card from 1959. After that, we worked together and determined that Omega's pyramid was removed from its pedestal in the late 1970s; that the base of their Bent was cast in the shape of a pyramid; and that affixed to it are the original 1932 plaques from the Omega pyramid. Therefore, WY Alpha has one of the newest Sigma Tau pyramids in existence.

TO CLEMSON AND BEYOND

After what seemed like a never-ending mountain of information, I finally moved on and continued the Bentspedition on December 22. The route took me directly through Gatlinburg and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Words don't convey how beautiful that drive is. Past the mountains, I found myself at Western Carolina Univ., home to the North Carolina Eta Chapter. They don't have a Bent yet, but by then I had picked up on the pattern of steel sculptures from the American Institute of Steel Construction scattered around American universities. Theirs appeared to be new.

Figure 6: (right) The original 1903 Sigma Tau Minutes Book with paperweights and keys.



I made it to South Carolina just after nightfall and worked my way through the hills to Clemson. SC Alpha's concrete Bent monument stands about 8 ft. tall and is elegantly painted white (**Figure 5**). Outside of Clemson, I stopped at a Walmart to buy a sleeping bag and some pillows. By Charlotte, I was ready to put them to use, so in a Cheddar's parking lot just off I-85, I got the best sleep I'd had in days. *Hotel Tacoma* was now officially lavish.

The days leading up to Christmas were productive, as I visited chapters in North Carolina, with the second most ridiculous experience taking place at Virginia Tech (VA Beta) in Blacksburg. Due to the holiday season, every building there was locked. That didn't work very well, considering that their Bent marker was pinned inside a building. To make a long story short, I wound up spending over an hour finding a way inside and through a highly secured building just to discover, oh, this is the University President's office... Hmm... It's probably not in here. Eventually, thanks to an architectural clue in a photo from Curt, I found their Bent monument, which is actually located across the courtyard from that building. What a way to spend a morning!

ROUND TWO

The remaining chapters on the first leg went smoothly, and I got home just before New Year's, as expected. It didn't feel right though as there were still two weeks of break left, and so many listings were still incomplete. My restlessness took over and quickly I mapped out another leg and set off again on January 2. The first stop (44th chapter) was the NE Alpha Chapter at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

While at TBP HQ, I learned a great many things, including that Angie Boles makes the best sweet tea around. I also learned that NE Alpha has a large chest of old Sigma Tau stuff. Curt said he didn't have time to sort through all of it the last time he was there, but that there was probably some good stuff in it worth looking at. When I tell you he was onto something, I mean it! The NE Alpha Chapter president, **Rylie P. Steffen**, and I spent five hours reviewing every document in that chest and what we uncovered was profound. Curt had spoken of a long-lost Sigma Tau ritual. Rumor was that it was supposed to be passed down from Bob Nagel to Jim Froula to Curt, but Froula had no recollection of the ritual's existence. Ry and I located a 1965 printing of the Sigma Tau ritual handbook, which details multiple types of rituals, not just initiations. Curt was blown away by the finding and even more, we found the original record book (**Fig. 6**) containing minutes dating back to the first 1903 brainstorming meeting when the Sigma Tau founders met for the first time over a year before it was founded. The historical significance of our finds cannot be fully comprehended yet, but I look forward to learning more about Sigma Tau in the future.

Through the remaining days of the second leg, I visited both Iowa chapters, all five Wisconsin chapters, all of the remaining Illinois chapters, all but one Indiana chapter, and all Southern Ohio chapters, except for Ohio Eta (Air Force Institute of Technology). A word of advice: **READ** the Bent-O-Rama listings and make sure you phone ahead if a chapter is located on a military base. Ask me how I know. Let's just say I technically have one chapter left to visit in Dayton, Ohio.

The second leg was full of ups and downs. I fell in love with Chicago and am looking forward to returning this summer. During my stop at the Illinois Beta Chapter's Bent at Illinois Tech, I was thrilled to be back on solid ground because minutes earlier I was standing in a glass box hanging off the top floor of the Willis Tower. I'm not a huge fan of heights, so it was stressful. (**Figure 7**)

One of my favorite encounters was with Jennie Klumpp, undergraduate advisor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). I was directed to her office while inquiring about the location of WI Gamma Chapter's Bent, and she didn't really know what I was referring to until I showed her a picture of another Bent monument. We then walked down to the main hallway where it hangs on the wall, and we had a conversation about Tau Beta Pi and the Bentspedition. Here are her thoughts on the exchange:

I have been an academic advisor in the College of Engineering & Applied Science at UWM for 24 years. So, of course, I have always had an awareness of Tau Beta Pi. However, it was not until Nick wandered into our office over winter break that I really gave the organization's Bent much consideration. In fact, when Nick said he was looking for it and wondered if I could lend an assist, I had to ask him what he meant when he said "Bent." I am embarrassed to say, I didn't know that the large bronze "thing" hanging in one of our main halls was a Bent.

I must say when Nick explained what he was doing, I was both shocked and impressed! And, as a mom, a little bit concerned. Traveling the country, living out of his truck to take pictures of the Bents spread throughout the country—that is true commitment.

As a result of meeting Nick and seeing his commitment to finding Bents on campuses across the country, as well as his commitment to Tau Beta Pi, I have a newfound appreciation for the organization and its impact on students.

Jennie has since located an informative plaque describing their Bent monument's dedication and she and other UWM employees are ensuring that it is hung near their monument, so everyone may understand what it represents.



Figure 7: "The Ledge" glass box at the top of the Willis Tower in Chicago, IL.

There were a few other notable encounters on the second leg. I had the chance to talk with the chief advisor of the Ohio Xi Chapter at Miami University as well as the deans of engineering at both Bradley University (IL Delta) and the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign (IL Alpha). There were some low points too. I spent the coldest night of the trip at the I-70 rest stop in Greenfield, OH. I was woken up by the cold that morning, after which I turned the truck on for warmth. That experience made me think about those who don't have that luxury. Then, later that morning, I got a flat tire on I-70 just before my exit in Richmond, Indiana. There's nothing like lying under your truck on the shoulder of the interstate as semis blow past you in both lanes.

ROUND THREE

Spring break was consumed by leg three of the Bentspedition, and I'm still amazed that I made it back to Kansas on time. I drove 5,000 miles through Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Puerto Rico, Arkansas, and Missouri. It was a wonderful surprise to wind up at Texas Xi (UT Dallas) as they were hosting the District 10 Conference (**Figure 9, page 45**).

Kansas Gamma doesn't make it to D10 Conferences often, so I enjoyed meeting the people there very much and what an opportunity to ask all the chapters about their monuments. Walking into a situation like that is a Bent hunter's dream.

There were many highlights in the Southern states, but my favorite experience of all was visiting Puerto Rico Alpha on Pi Day. I had a contact there named Luis F. Torrens Sotomayor who has been an Engineering Futures



Figure 8: Nick (middle) in Puerto Rico during the PR Alpha Pi Day festivities. On the left is PR Alpha Chapter president, Yalairy K. Garcia Rivera, and on the right vice president, Yaziel A. Rodríguez Suárez.

Facilitator for some time. He hosted our session at Kansas Gamma last fall and we really enjoyed having him, so it was a true pleasure getting to hang out with him for the morning. Also, their chapter was giving away pizza for Pi Day, and I enjoyed showing up unannounced as a random chapter officer from Kansas. They don't get very many visitors, which doesn't make much sense to me. Personally, I'm looking for any excuse to visit Puerto Rico again. (**Figure 8**)

CONCLUSION

The Bentspedition is the greatest adventure I have ever tackled. It has taken me to places I never would have gone; introduced me to people I never would have known; and broadened my horizons and helped me better understand the world we live in. Whether you're interested in pursuing a Bentspedition or not, it is my hope that this story will inspire you to set a goal and accomplish it despite all obstacles.

This summer, I will visit many other chapters in the Midwest and the Northeast. A video of every visit can be found on KS Gamma's Instagram story highlights. "BoR #1" contains videos from the first leg. "BoR #2" contains those from the second, and so forth. Our Instagram handle is [@ksutbp](https://www.instagram.com/ksutbp) (**QR code available on page 45**). Follow us if you'd like to tag along on this wild ride!

Bentspedition: Author Info and Additional Images

NICHOLAS R. DIVILBISS is a senior studying architectural engineering at Kansas State University. Next year, he will continue at K-State towards a master's degree in the same subject. Nick enjoys kayaking, singing, and litter cleanups. Growing up in foster care, after an abusive childhood, he didn't believe he could succeed in college. Before trying, he pursued a law enforcement career as a 911 dispatcher and a volunteer fireman, only to be told that his foster care background disqualified him from LEO positions. After selling real estate for a few years, Nick committed to going to college and doing whatever was required to be successful. Through much sacrifice, he's maintained a [REDACTED] while gaining his first leadership experiences through Tau Beta Pi and for that reason, he's extremely grateful for TBIT's role in both his personal and professional life.

More images will be posted to the Tau Beta Pi website at:
www.tbp.org/?Bentspedition

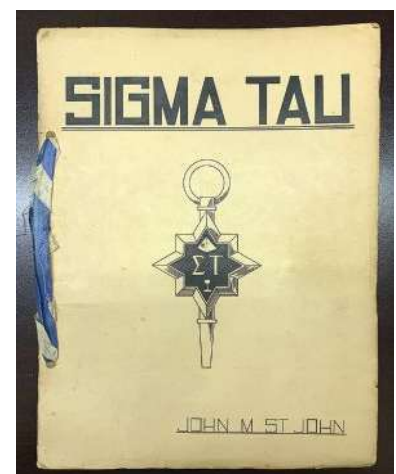


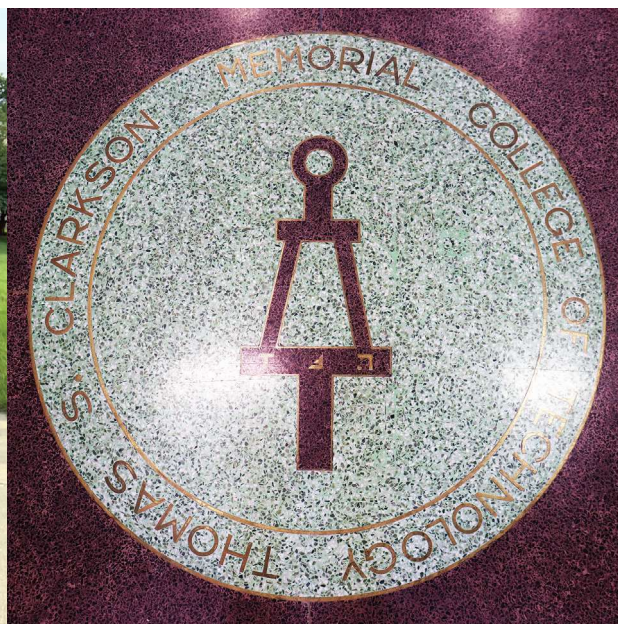
Follow along on Nick's journey using the QR code below.



(Above) Nick sitting on the Pyramid monument for the Sigma Chapter of Sigma Tau at Oklahoma State University.

(Below) Figure 9: Nick (far left) with the group of Tau Bate leaders in attendance at the District 10 Conference in Dallas, Texas.





A BENTSPEDITION UPDATE

BY NICHOLAS R. DIVILBISS, KANSAS GAMMA '25

INTRODUCTION

I'm Nick, the Kansas Gamma Chapter president, and on December 17, 2023, I visited a few Tau Beta Pi collegiate chapters between Kansas and North Carolina. Since then, Bent monument hunting has become a lifestyle and by March 2025, I'll finish the first ever *Bentspedition* following three rules: visit all active collegiate chapters; no flying unless driving is impossible; and finally, hotels are off limits.

In May 2024, 92 visits occurred during the project's fourth leg, including every chapter in North Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, D.C. and Maryland, along with all remaining chapters in Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia (plus South Dakota Beta).



HIGHLIGHTS

While visiting the University of Nebraska, in Lincoln, I found the NE Alpha Bent alongside a newly refurbished Sigma Tau pyramid. (**See Image below**)

In the Dakotas, I found many Bent monuments but unfortunately no Sigma Tau pyramids.

I enjoyed visiting the Upper Peninsula in Michigan and seeing the Mackinac Bridge lights shimmering across the waters of Lake Michigan.

In New York, I found two unique monuments: a ceramic Bent at Alfred University (NY Sigma) and a terrazzo Bent at Clarkson University (NY Theta — **See Image above/right**).

Next, I 'set sail' for the shores of Vermont on the Lake Champlain Ferry to visit the VT Alpha Chapter, the birthplace of our Association's founder **Edward H. Williams Jr., Ph.D.**

The true solitude of Vermont led to strong feelings of homesickness and loneliness, leading me to reflect and question the point of this trip.

Fortunately, the next day was a true achievement as I laid eyes on the Maine Alpha Bent in Orono, nearly 4,000 miles from home.

Having no idea whether that Bent existed, it was a tremendously fulfilling find.

In Massachusetts, there were many Bents and lots of traffic. Regrettably, "Tortillo the Tacoma" took his first hit, while at MIT, when a parking attendant backed us straight into an obviously visible handrail.

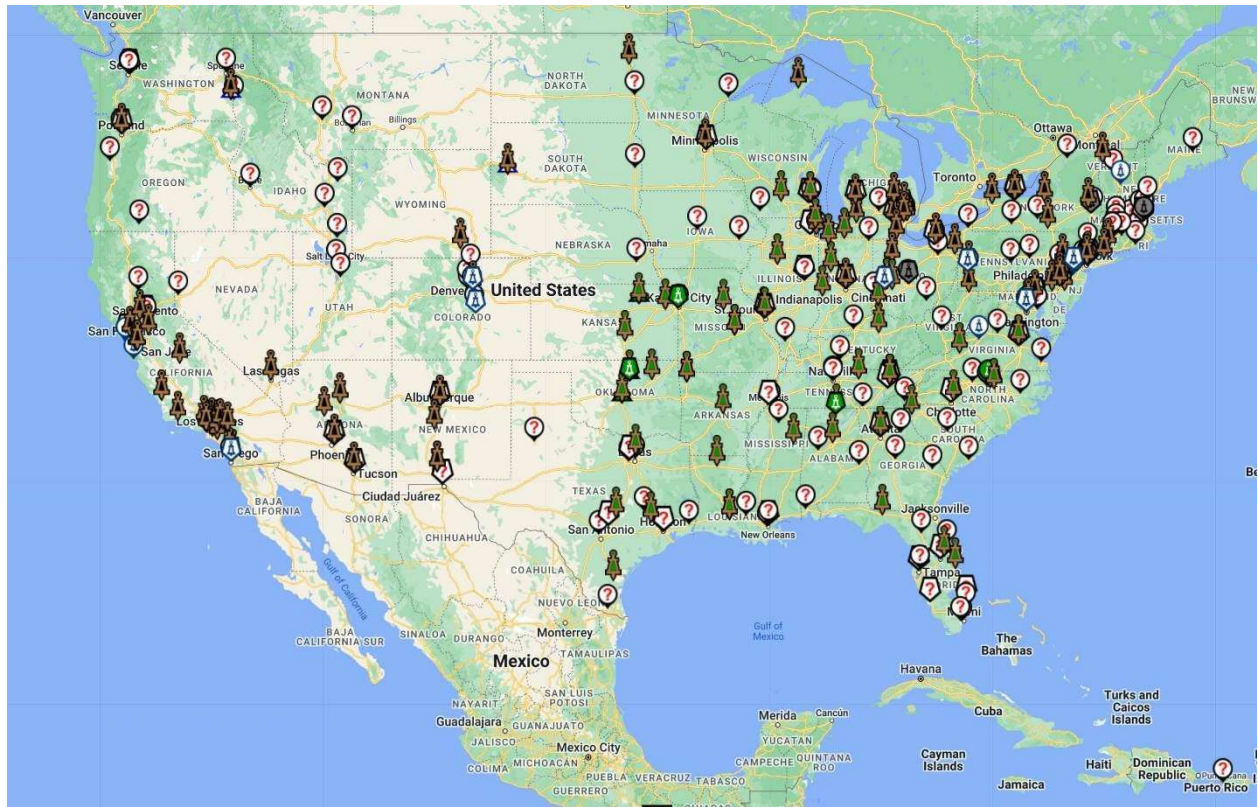
New York Upsilon at West Point had the most jaw dropping vista of any campus thus far. With the historic Hudson River's twists and turns through towering mountains, while helicopters swooped down overhead.

New Jersey, Delaware, Washington D.C., and Maryland were kind to me and I was happy to catch up with District Directors **Sandhiya Kannan, NYO '17, (D2)**; and **J.P. Blackford, DC G '95, (D4)**; as well as Delaware Alpha's president **Georgia Angeletakis.**

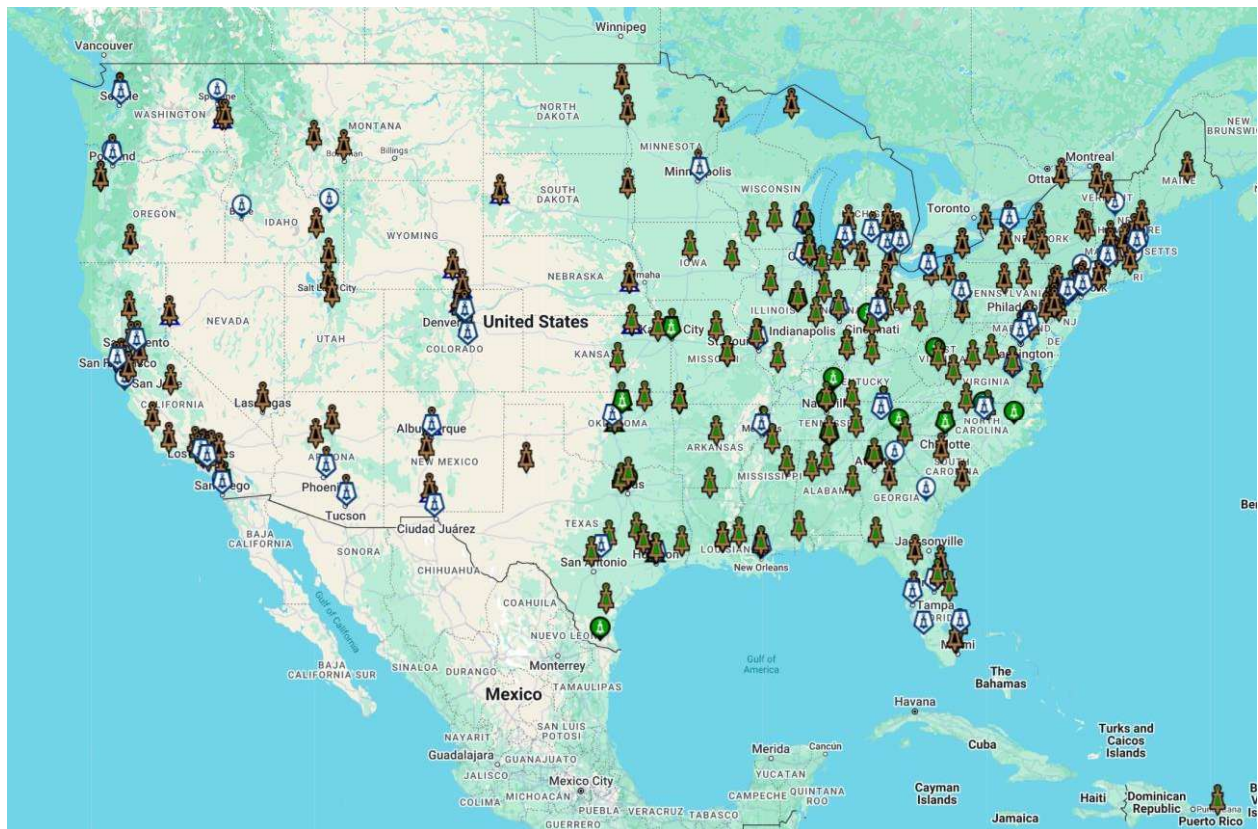
Maryland Epsilon's Bent at Morgan State University (**See Image above/left**) represented the final chapter on the East Coast, while Lewisburg, PA, stole my heart as one of the most beautiful small towns in America. Then, I finally made it on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base to see Ohio Eta's Bents!

Yes, the *Bentspedition* is alive and well, and I can't wait to share more with you in the summer 2025 grand finale article!

Bent-O-Rama map before Nick's Bentspedition:



Bent-O-Rama map after Nick's Bentspedition:



2024 Public Relations Committee's New TBP Mascot:

Charge #1 - Process (Bees, Beavers, and Octopi)



If TBP was an animal,
which would it be? Why?

- Small: Octopus
- Medium: Bee
- Large: Beaver



Tau Beta Pi—The Engineering Honor Society

2024 Public Relations Committee's Alternate TBP Mascot:

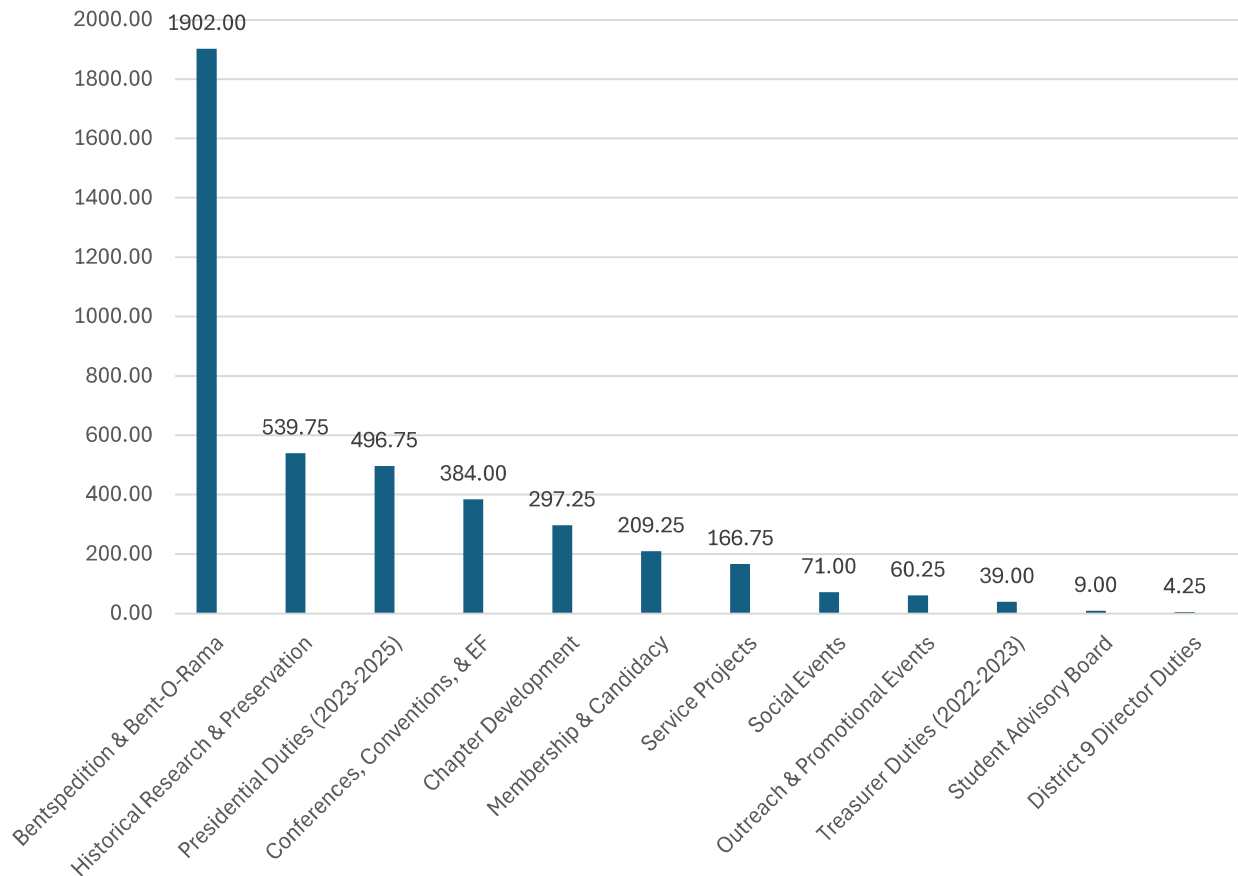


Tau Beta Pi Involvement Record for Nicholas R. Divilbiss
(Summary)

Category	Rank	Hours
Bentspedition & Bent-O-Rama	1	1902.00
Historical Research & Preservation	2	539.75
Presidential Duties (2023-2025)	3	496.75
Conferences, Conventions, & EF	4	384.00
Chapter Development	5	297.25
Membership & Candidacy	6	209.25
Service Projects	7	166.75
Social Events	8	71.00
Outreach & Promotional Events	9	60.25
Treasurer Duties (2022-2023)	10	39.00
Student Advisory Board	11	9.00
District 9 Director Duties	12	4.25

Total Involvement in TBP: 4179.25 hours

Hours of Tau Beta Pi Involvement by Category



Tau Beta Pi Involvement Record for Nicholas R. Divilbiss
(Summary)

